

SANDY DUROSIER

NEW LONDON, CT

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE TESTIMONY

FEBRUARY 17, 2017

H.B. 7027 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM  
ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2019, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR

RE: DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, CONNECTICUTICORPS LINE ITEM

Distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Sandy Durosier and I am here to testify in support of restoring the cut of \$125,458 to the ConnectiCorps line item in the Department of Labor's budget.

I believe that Serve Here CT, which is funded through the ConnectiCorps line item, is an extremely valuable program that provides relief to young professionals like me to afford to work, live, and potentially return to school in Connecticut.

My journey began over a decade ago and an ocean away in Haiti. Through it, I faced several challenges and had to adapt quickly. I earned a bachelor's degree in Biology from Wesleyan University and Master's in Cellular & Molecular Biology from University of New Haven. I worked in a lab for a year, and we lost funding at the end of my contract, and I became unemployed.

The reason for my success into getting back into the work force is because programs like Serve Here CT exist. Serve Here CT has partially funded the current position that I hold now as a Success Advisor at a non-profit, Higher Edge in New London. Serve Here CT has alleviated the financial burden on my organization to hire new staff, and to me as well in the form of student

debt subsidy. My role is to guide and support students in college for successful graduation.

Serve Here CT has helped me to thrive in Connecticut by connecting me with a growing network of professionals who live and work here and taught me the importance of fostering connections while growing my social capital to advance my career and thrive in this state.

The module is set up as a sociology course, and our discussions range from issues and problems millennials face in the workplace, to how to overcome initial shyness, and reach out to potential mentors and community leaders about getting involved and starting something. We have a book with assigned readings that guides our discussions. Most importantly, we have made long-term connections with each other, and benefit from the different expertise that all each of the fellows bring to the table.

I have had the opportunity to become a Serve Here CT fellow, and gotten to benefit from this program, and so I see the potential in this program and what it has to offer to past, current and future fellows. I ask that the senators, representatives, and distinguished committee members give to this program the possibility and the opportunity to show what it can accomplish for young professionals living in Connecticut by continuing to fund Serve Here CT. I am asking you to believe that this program has made a difference in the lives of the fellows, and that giving your funding to continue creating, making more positions and jobs available for young people in our state, and hopefully expand this program will not be in vain.

Sincerely,  
Sandy Durosier

2016/2017 Serve Here CT Fellow  
Success Advisor at Higher Edge in New London